

# The Qur'ân & Modern Science

Compatible or Incompatible?

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King Fahd National Library Catalog-in-Publication Data

Dr. Zakir Naik

The Quran and Modern Science. Zakir Naik - Riyadh. 2007

80 p, 14x21 cm ISBN: 9960-9849-3-1

1-Quran and science 2- Quran - Miracle I-Title

229.45 dc 1428/176

Legal Deposit no.1428/176

ISBN: 9960-9849-3-1

Supervised by: **Abdul Malik Mujahid**

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Website: www.darussalam.com

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# The Qur'ân

## The Challenge of the Qur'ân

Literature and poetry have been instruments of human expression and creativity, in all cultures. The world also witnessed an age when literature and poetry occupied pride of position, similar to that now enjoyed by science and technology.

Muslims as well as non-Muslims agree that the Qur'ân is Arabic literature par excellence – that it is the best Arabic literature on the face of the earth. The Qur'ân challenges mankind in the following Verses:

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ  
مِّن مِّثْلِهِ ۚ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ  
صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي  
وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

And if ye are in doubt as to what We have revealed from time to time to our servant then produce a surah like thereunto; and call your witnesses or helpers (If there are any) besides Allah, if ye are truthful. But if ye cannot and of a surety ye cannot then fear the Fire whose fuel is Men and Stones, which is prepared for those who reject Faith. (Al-Qur'ân 2:23-24)<sup>1</sup>

The challenge of the Qur'ân, is to produce a single *Sûrah* (chapter) like the *Sûrahs* it contains. The same challenge is repeated in the Qur'ân several times. The challenge to produce a *Sûrah*, which, in beauty, eloquence, depth and

1. Al-Qur'ân 2:23-24 indicates *Surah* or Chapter No. 2 and *Âyât* or Verses 23 and 24. The same notation is followed throughout the book. References and translation of the Qur'ân are from the translation of the Holy Qur'ân by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, published by King Fahd Holy Qur'ân Printing Complex, Al-Madinah, Saudi Arabia.



meaning is at least somewhat similar to a Qur'anic *Sûrah* remains unmet to this day.

A modern rational man, however, would never accept a religious scripture which says, in the best possible poetic language, that the world is flat. This is because we live in an age, where human reason, logic and science are given primacy. Not many would accept the Qur'an's extraordinarily beautiful language, as proof of its Divine origin. Any scripture claiming to be a divine revelation must also be acceptable on the strength of its own reason and logic.

According to the famous physicist and Nobel Prize winner, Albert Einstein, "Science without religion is lame. Religion without science is blind." Let us therefore study the Qur'ân, and analyze whether the Qur'ân and Modern Science are compatible or incompatible?

The Qur'ân is not a book of science but a book of 'signs', i.e. *Âyâts*. There are more than six thousand 'signs' in the Qur'ân of which more than a thousand deal with science.

We all know that many a times science takes a 'U-turn'. In this book I have considered only established scientific facts and not mere hypotheses and theories that are based on assumptions and are not backed by proof.

## Astronomy





# Creation of the Universe

## The 'Big Bang'

The creation of the universe is explained by astrophysicists in a widely accepted phenomenon, popularly known as the 'Big Bang'. It is supported by observational and experimental data gathered by astronomers and astrophysicists for decades. According to the 'Big Bang', the whole universe was initially one big mass (Primary Nebula). Then there was a 'Big Bang' (Secondary Separation) which resulted in the formation of galaxies. These then divided to form stars, planets, the sun, the moon, etc. The origin of the universe was unique and the probability of its occurring by 'chance' is zero.

The Qur'ân contains the following verse, regarding the origin of the universe:

أَوَلَمْ يَرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا  
فَفُتِنْنَاهُمَا

Do not the Unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of Creation), before We clove them asunder? (Al-Qur'ân 21:30)

The striking congruence between the Qur'ânic verse and the 'Big Bang' is inescapable! How could a book, which first appeared in the deserts of Arabia 1400 years ago, contain this profound scientific truth?

